



The Jewish

Gaily Forward

Tevet+Sh'vat+Adar 5771 • January+February 2011

What's Up at Sha'ar Zahav

Stretch, Kvetch, and Breathe

SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 1-3 PM

Simple stretches to loosen up the heart, mind and soul; practice with deep breathing and deep listening.

Cantor Unplugged IV:

Broadway Night with a Little Yiddishkayt

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29, 8:00 PM

Admission: \$10 members; \$15 non-members; children 12 and under free.

Music in the Mishkan Returns!

SUNDAYS, FEBRUARY 6, MARCH 13,

MAY 8, 4:00 PM

The acclaimed Bridge Players return to CSZ for the twelfth season of Music in the Mishkan.

Beyond Gender, Sex, and Race:

A Class with Rabbi Peretz Wolf-Prusan

SATURDAYS, FEBRUARY 12, MARCH 5,

APRIL 9, 5:00 PM

More details on all these programs on pages 4-5

Jeffrey A. Miller Scholar in Residence Weekend

BY ROSE KATZ

Services and study sessions with Rabbi Anne Brener



Rabbi Anne Brener, author of *Mourning and Mitzvah: A Guided Journal for Walking the Mourner's Path Through Grief to Healing*, will be our guest teacher throughout Shabbat, January 21-23, 2011. With her, we will explore the ways in which Jewish ritual and practice prepare us to embrace life, while still acknowledging the presence of death. By refusing to deny death, Jewish ritual and practice actually can help us to embrace life more fully.

Rabbi Brener will be delivering the drash during Kabbalat Shabbat services on Friday evening and will teach our family community after Saturday morning Shacharit services. The session will cover such subjects as illness, grief, and death, and methods of sharing these sensitive issues with children. Following Kiddush lunch, there will be another opportunity to learn with Rabbi Brener in an afternoon session. These workshops are an opportunity to explore, in a creative way, the ways in which Jewish ritual and practice prepare us to experience life in its fullness without having to pretend that life's challenges are not part of the picture.

Rabbi Anne Brener, LCSW, is Professor of Ritual and Human Development at the Academy for Jewish Religion in Los Angeles, and author of *Mourning and Mitzvah: A Guided Journal for Walking the Mourner's Path Through Grief to Healing*.

A House in Order: Are You Prepared? Presentations in conjunction with the Jeffrey A. Miller Scholar In Residence Weekend

Among the most caring activities that we can complete for our loved ones is to ensure that our wishes about health care and end-of life issues are known and put into writing. With that in mind, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav's Chevra Kadisha (Holy Burial Society) has organized an afternoon of presentations in conjunction with the Jeffrey A. Miller Scholar in Residence weekend.

On Sunday, January 23, from 2 – 5 pm, congregants will have the opportunity to hear from and ask questions of community professionals regarding health care directives, powers of attorney, wills and trusts, cemetery arrangements, and additional practical and spiritual issues. During the first hour, speakers will give brief presentations; this will be followed by an opportunity for congregants to speak individually with presenters and to complete power of attorney forms and health care directives. Please join us for this invaluable chance to contemplate your wishes and complete important paperwork. Your family will thank you!

Rabbi's Study



The Rabbi's column will appear in the next issue.

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Congregation Sha'ar Zahav is a member of the Union for Reform Judaism, the World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Jews, and the San Francisco Organizing Project



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Learning to Reconnect



BACK IN 2005, I received a phone call from Abby Porth, the Associate Director of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC). She told me that JCRC was planning to unveil a program to help Jews with varying perspectives on Israel and Palestine talk to each other in a civil fashion. Would I be willing, she asked, to be part of an advisory committee who would listen to what was planned and comment on it? It would only be one meeting, she promised.

One year and *many* meetings later, the Advisory Committee agreed that Project Reconnections (PR) was ready to be launched. People representing a diversity of opinions, religious backgrounds, ages, sexual preferences and nationalities were selected to participate. We came as individuals, not as representatives of whatever organization we might work for or community we might belong to, although many of the people who participated were leaders in their community. Three members of CSZ participated – myself, Terry Fletcher and Ray Bernstein.

We started out by *not* talking about Israel and Palestine, but by getting to know each other and how we saw ourselves as Jews. We set ground rules and talked about what it meant to be “the other” or the outsider. We talked about the various “isms” in our lives and looked at what united us and what divided us. Only then were we ready to broach the main topic.

As we became more comfortable with each other, we were more willing to listen to a point of view with which we disagreed. We knew we were not there to change anyone’s opinion, and we learned that, even while holding different opinions, we could remain in community with each other. Some people even became friends.

Terry Fletcher has said, “Participating in Project Reconnections was a life-changing experience for me. I sat in the same room with, met with and got to know people who I had previously considered my adversaries or even enemies.... To my surprise I found that I liked nearly everyone there and was able to make lasting friendships

and other relationships across what had seemed like insurmountable political differences.... Though my basic views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict didn’t change as a result of the process, I learned to understand and have compassion for those who didn’t see things my way, and also noticed more respect and understanding of me on the part of others.”

For me, Project Reconnections gave me hope –hope that our community would not self-destruct, hope that peace could happen, both here and in the Middle East. When we started, people in the group looked at those they disagreed with and saw enemies. At the end, they saw human beings, b’tzelem Elohim, created in G-d’s image.

Now, as part of the *Year of Civil Discourse (YCD) Initiative*, a joint project of the JCRC and the Jewish Community Federation, in partnership with the Northern California Board of Rabbis, Congregation Sha’ar Zahav will be participating in the next iteration of Project Reconnections. Under the guidance of Rachel Eryn Kalish, the facilitator who worked with the first Project Reconnections, a group of 18-25 congregants will get a chance to listen to each other, learn to accept disagreement without demonizing the other, and help build a stronger community here at Congregation Sha’ar Zahav.

While I wish that everyone could participate, that’s not going to be possible. But I hope that the small group will be able to take what they learn and spread it out to the larger community. I am writing this column in late November, so I don’t know exactly how participants will be selected, but I promise that the process will be transparent. In a first meeting with Rachel Eryn, Rabbi Angel, Terry Fletcher and I came up with a preliminary list of criteria:

A participant must be a CSZ member in good standing who is invested in participating in the life of this community and continuing to be a member of our community

We want a diversity of views represented

We will strive to include a diversity of under-represented constituencies

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Va’ad Members

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Volume 33, issue 3

What's Up at Sha'ar Zahav

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Meetings

CSZ-SFOP Organizing Committee Meeting

THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 7:00 - 8:30 PM

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Join us in building relationships and pursuing justice. Our current focus is how we can help improve state government so that more money will be available for health care, education and other worthy causes. There are many ways to be engaged, to develop leadership and relationships, to ACT. Be in touch and find the right fit for you. For more information, please contact Dana Vinicoff at vinicoff@hotmail.com.

Va'ad Meeting

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 6:45 PM

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 6:45 PM

All are welcome to attend and listen to Sha'ar Zahav's monthly board meeting with its pre-set agenda.

Chavurot

East Bay Chavurah

FRIDAY, JANUARY 14, 6:45 PM

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 6:45 PM

Sha'ar Zahav members and their guests are invited to Sha'ar Zahav's East Bay Chavurah, held the second Friday of every month. Our evening begins with blessings and a vegetarian/vegan potluck. At 7:30, adults and teens continue our Shabbat experience with some meaningful text-based Jewish dialogue. To RSVP or host a future event, please contact Jessica Israel Cannon, jisrael68@yahoo.com.

Post-Oneg Social Group

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 9:00 PM

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 9:00 PM

After welcoming the Sabbath at Sha'ar

Zahav's Friday night services, we invite you to join the Post Oneg Group for a pay-your-own-way dinner at a local restaurant. We welcome all current, prospective, or new members. For more information, please contact Jim Acerra, jacerra@msn.com

Service Leaders Chavurah

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 7:00 PM

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 7:00 PM

The Service Leaders Chavurah is a dynamic group exploring prayer and service leading techniques, meeting monthly.

If you are interested in joining, please contact Cantor Sharon Bernstein, cantorbernstein@gmail.com.

Services

Shabbat Shira

FRIDAY, JANUARY 14, 7:30 PM

Join us for an exciting new folk/pop/rock/jazz musical service with Cantor Sharon Bernstein and our amazing band and chorus!

Cantor Unplugged IV

*Broadway Night
with a Little
Yiddishkayt*



~ Saturday, January 29 ~
8:00 pm

Join Cantor Sharon Bernstein and friends as she throws off her cantorial persona and wanders through the (American) (Jewish) (Gay) songbook

Admission: \$10 members; \$15 non-members;
children 12 and under free

Sponsored by The Rabbi Julius and Pearl Funk
Musical Events Fund

Classes

Jewish Spiritual Practices Monthly Check-In

TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Would you like to cultivate and experiment with more mindfulness practices? Would you like spiritual friendship and companionship? Please join Rabbi Camille Shira Angel on the first Tuesday of each month to meditate, share insights and challenges, meditate a little more, and end with calling out the Shema.

Waking Up! Walking the Path of the Morning Service

MONDAY, JANUARY 10 AND FIVE FOLLOWING MONDAYS, 6:30 – 8:00 PM

(NO CLASS JANUARY 17)

Combine study and practice as we dive into the morning service. We'll use part of class time to support each other's practices and to talk about our experiences of prayer. Then we'll look closely at the meaning, function and history of the different parts of the morning service, including differences between weekday mornings and Shabbat. Cost for the series: \$48 for members; \$60 for non-members.

Stretch, Kvetch, and Breathe

SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 1 – 3 PM

We'll start with some simple stretches to loosen up the heart, mind and soul. Then we will practice deep listening skills and give each other the gift of being heard. Lastly, we will experience the power of breath integration and control. Dr Zvi Bellin will lead the group in creating a safe container for intimate sharing and expression.

Project Reconnections at CSZ

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16TH, FROM 2 – 6 PM

A half-day program for anyone interested in finding out more about Project Reconnections –please see the President's column in this issue for more details. Learn what this year-long program will look like, and experience some of what the group will do. Even if you don't think you can commit to the full program, you are welcome to join us.

A Jewish Path to Meaning with Dr. Zvi Bellin

TUESDAYS, FEBRUARY 1, 8, 15, 22, 7–8: 30 PM

Explore how the integration of Jewish-infused practices of awareness can enhance a sustainable sense of personal meaning. Participants will learn the connection between the breath and the Jewish concept of soul. Participants will practice acceptance of their bodies' gifts and limitations as they transform their perception of body into a divine vessel. Drop-ins are \$42; preregister at the office for the whole series for \$150.

What Makes A Good Argument? Jewish Sources On Respectful, Compassionate Dialogue: Promoting Arguments for the Sake of Heaven.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 7 -9 PM

We are a people who argue. We will always be passionately engaged in conversations. How do the sages guide us to make those arguments fruitful and even congenial to creating a close community? Our teachers were convinced that arguments within a certain frame could add greatly to a community's conversation and create closer bonds between people. Join us as we study the Torah of Civil Dialogue. Taught by Rabbi Sheldon Lewis.

Planning for Retirement:

Maximizing Retirement Income

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 6:00 – 8:00 PM

We will explore options to maximize retirement income for ourselves or for our senior loved ones. Topics will include the preferred investments for seniors and how they are performing. We will also look at your home as part of your financial assets. Join Hannah Fleck of Cambridge Investment Research, and Nancy Meyer of Zephyr Real Estate for an informative session as we discuss this important topic. Please RSVP to 415-861-6932.

Beyond Gender, Sex, and Race: The Development of Character and Virtue in Rambam's Eight Chapters

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 5:00 PM

Continuing on March 5 and April 9

Exploring *The Eight Chapters of Maimonides on Ethics*, and related works, we will ask how Maimonides answers the question of our time: Does character and virtue transcend the body? What is the mind-body connection in rabbinic Judaism? Can we reach each other, overcoming differences in gender and sexual identity, through the teachings of a 12th century wandering Jew? Join Rabbi Peretz Wolf-Prusan of Lehrhaus Judaica as we learn, argue, share, drink a little schnapps, and conclude with Havdalah.

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Learning Partnerships

Do you have a deep desire to know more about all or parts of Torah, the Prophets, Maimonides, Sefat Emet, Apocrypha, the novels of Anita Diamant or Philip Roth, Israeli film? Some other book or media of interest to Jews? Yearn no more. It's time to act. Somewhere in our vast membership, there is another Sha'ar Zahav-nik with similar urges. And now, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav will help you set up a Learning Partnership so that you can read, study, and understand with a study partner. Our Learning Partnerships matchmaker will be Mike Zimmerman, long-time Congregation Sha'ar Zahav member. He will find for you an appropriate study buddy, then you can work out your own schedule, method of study, and list of materials to be tackled. CSZ will be there to support and encourage your learning experience, however we can.

You can contact Mike with questions or study wishes at (415) 252-7672 or mzim@earthlink.net. We can learn a lot from each other. Let's get started!

Blessed Memory



Ed note: Shirley Weiner died on December 10, 2010. May her memory be a blessing

AS I WRITE,

I am caring for my mother whose health is rapidly declining. I have been taking care of my mother for many years now, as Parkinson's has ravaged her body and mind. Throughout this process, Judaism has been a source of strength and a guiding principal for me. It will also be a guide for me as I grieve for her and face a future without her. I am grateful to have so much in my tradition that will help me navigate this most difficult passage.

Talking about grief and loss with children is also no easy thing. In my time at Beit Sefer, we have had to find ways to address grief because of the sadness and overwhelming loss both in Jewish history and in the real day-to-day lives of our students. I think there is a tendency to want to protect children from the harsh realities of loss and pain. But I think we do a disservice to them when we exclude from their Jewish education what our tradition teaches about death and loss.

Our Jewish rituals about death and loss are profound and deep with meaning. I often say that we, as Jews, really get the mourning process right. I strongly believe in teaching children about *Chevra Kaddisha* (a group of volunteers who, with proper respect, ritually cleanse the deceased and dress the body in shrouds) and the rituals of *Tahara* (both the overall process of burial preparation, and a specific step in the purification of the body.) I think it is important that they understand the rituals around *Kaddish* and *Shiva*.

I often remember that one of the greatest teaching moments in Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer was when she brought students to her house to give a lesson on *Bikkur Cholim* (visiting the sick) when she was very ill with cancer.

We call this living Judaism, even when we are teaching about death, because we use the experiences of our lives to help students understand the importance of Jewish values. For some time, I have been struggling with how to reintroduce mourning into our morning circle and recently I decided that though the prayer is long and difficult for young students, we will say *Kaddish* together. I strongly feel that it is one of the most important prayers in a *minyan*. Originally, I omitted the prayer out of a wish to protect our students. I realize now that this was misguided. It is precisely in the loving circle of community and families that we should introduce the concept of loss and of remembering our loved ones.

My mother, Shirley Weiner, shaped my Jewish education and my love of Judaism. She created a home where Jewish life was constant, filled with Shabbat, Chanukah, Passover. She supported my father who worked as a Jewish professional for over thirty years. She made me mandel bread, spoke Yiddish to me, sewed me Queen Esther costumes, sent me to Israel and to Jewish Summer camps. She signed me up for a lifetime membership in Had-dasah. She studied to become an adult Bat Mitzvah. She recognized in me an unrelenting love of Judaism and she fed and nurtured it, in every way a good Jewish mother can. My mother has always been proud of the work that I have done in the Jewish community, she knew that "teaching the kinder" was a way of assuring that vital Jewish life lives on. I hope that my work can continue to be an homage to her.

I have been so grateful to be a part of the Congregation Sha'ar Zahav community as I lean into this difficult time. I am grateful for all the love and support even as I open to the pain and loss of this experience. My hope is that it can strengthen me as a teacher and guide my spiritual practice. I hope that it will be a lesson for me and those I

FAMILY CALENDAR

Friday Night Live

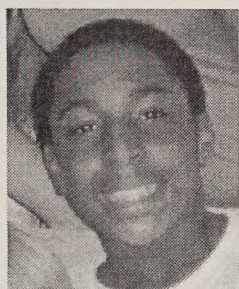
FRIDAY, JANUARY 7, 6:00 PM

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 6:00 PM

Calling all Kids! Bring yourselves and your favorite grown-ups and celebrate Shabbat with us. Designed for children 0 to 6 years, but all are welcome. Our Friday Night Live service will be followed by dinner in the Oneg Room. We will provide pizza (sponsored by parents), but we encourage you to bring a vegetarian dish to share with the community as well. FNL continues on the first Friday of the month during the school year.

teach in how to hold those we love in blessed memory. Finally, I pray that I can ignite the flame in others, as my mother lit in me: this burning passion to build a vibrant Jewish world.

B'Shalom,
Rebecca

**Malik Daniel****Desmond Bernstein**

will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on January 8, 2011. He will read from and give a drash on the parsha

"Bo", which tells of the exodus from Egypt.

Malik joined Sha'ar Zahav when he was two years old. He is now also a 7th grader at Brandeis Hillel Day School. He is natural athlete and loves to play sports, especially basketball, baseball, and soccer. He loves to cook and last year explored what it would be like to be a pastry chef.

In the past year he has spent time helping others through visits to the food bank and serving dinner at Most Holy Redeemer. He was a volunteer junior counselor at Pine Lake Day Camp last summer. More recently, he has begun participating in the Team Tzedek program and will be serving the community over the next year.

Malik has been preparing for his big day for about a year now with the help of his amazing mentor, Mark Reissbaum. He and his family would like to thank Mark and also thank Malik's many teachers at Beit Sefer, as well as the Rabbi and the Cantor for all of the encouragement, support and learning he has had along the way. Please join him and celebrate on this auspicious occasion.

**Elias Ross Trupin**

will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on February 19, 2011, just after his 13th birthday. He has been studying for this day with

Hershey Hirschkop, his mentor and fellow Red Sox fan.

"I am grateful to Hershey for being a great teacher and friend, and for helping me get through some Orange and Black torture," says Elias. "She's made studying for my Bar Mitzvah both interesting and fun."

Elias has worked hard for the past year and a half preparing for his Bar Mitzvah. In addition to learning his parsha, the Shabbat service, and writing a secret drash, he has volunteered at the Hayes Valley Farm, the Martin de Porres Soup Kitchen, and with Team Tzedek. A member of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav all his life, Elias has been a student at Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer since kindergarten. He is in the seventh grade at Presidio Hill School.

Elias is a dedicated athlete and all-around sports fan. Baseball is his greatest passion; he started playing at age 6, and plans to continue doing so for as long as his pitching arm holds up. When he's not on the diamond, Elias can be often be found practicing graffiti lettering, playing the ukulele, and grinning.

**Parker Windesheim-Zigas**

will be called torah on February 5, 2011. Parker is a 7th grade Spanish immersion student at James Lick Middle School in San

Francisco, and he has been attending Beit Seifer since Kindergarten. As a mixed-race child adopted into a Jewish home, the diversity at CSZ has supported Parker's exploration of his social as well as his spiritual identity. Thanks to all of Parker's teachers at CSZ for guiding him in his Jewish journey!

Parker likes to explore the world,

often on a skateboard. He's observant and cautious with just the right amount of determination. When he isn't skating or in school, he's usually dancing. He loves to hip-hop and freestyle, but he's received formal training from the SF Ballet since 3rd grade. In his words, ballet is the hardest sport he's ever engaged in.

His mentor, Martin Tannenbaum, has been a true friend, an inspiration and a motivator. He and Parker have developed a relationship that will go beyond the Bar Mitzvah training. Andrew Ramer, Parker's drash mentor, is helping Parker tap into his deeper thoughts. Parker's sister, Lisa, has paved the way as only an older sibling can. Keesha, the dog, protects him from a safe distance. Parker's family thanks everyone at CSZ for their support.

Cantor's Discretionary Fund

Sue Bojdak in honor of Cantor Bernstein's support & teaching in preparation for her bat mitzvah

Patricia Lin in honor of her niece, Abigail Lin Weissleder

CSZ Siddur Bookplate

Barbara Parker-Bell in honor of the wedding of Drew Parker-Rose & Flavio Epstein

Rabbi Julius & Pearl Funk Musical Event Fund

James Carlson in memory of Helen Buchbinder in memory of MJ Carlson, Andrew Carlson, Filippo Tuzzolino and Robert Roginski

Jonathan Funk & John Arnold in honor of Rabbi Angel's 10th anniversary

General Fund

Allan Berenstein in memory of Forrest Kincade, Don Albert and Chuck Norton, Marilyn O'Keeffe, Nick Papadopolus and Allan Craig

Henry Carrey in memory of Ruven Kirzhner

Eve Meyer & James Edlin in memory of Hans Meyer and Marion Meyer

Steve Elman in memory of Elliott Klein

Lisa Finkelstein for blessings of Sam, Celia & Joe

Andy Fyne & Richard Mikles in memory of Norma Kane

Avraham Giannini in memory of Mary Lou Giannini

Jill & Andrew Haas in honor of Paul Cohen

Ira Hirschfield & Tom Hansen in honor of Alex Ingersoll

Scott & Lynn Kaplan

Yona Lazarovitz

David Lowe

Leslie Miessner in memory of Recha Wertheimer

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Hal Podgur in honor of Barbara and Alan J. Coleman

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Molly Singer

Fran Starr

Sam Thal in honor of Alvin Baum

Janet Traub

Susan Tubbesing in memory of her aunt, Fay Mutchnick

Donald Unger

The estate of Eva Zysman

High Holiday Pledges 5771

Liz Boner

Henry Carrey

Dan Bellm

Adina & Dan Epelman in honor of Aaron Danzig

Jonathan Goldberg & Brady Dewar

Jerome Goldstein

Patricia Lin in honor of the High Holiday Mincha dancers

Stephen Rosenthal

Debra Wilensky

Music in the Mishkan Donations

Larry & Mary Bisbee

Rose Katz

Ron & Ruth Miguel

Janis Portal

Phyllis Mintzer Education Fund

Ophira Druch in honor of Sue Bojdak's bat mitzvah

Mark Lipsitz

Hilary Mandel in honor of Sue Bojdak's Bat Mitzvah

Jeanette Nichols in memory of Phyllis Mintzer

in memory of Isa Cymrot-Wu in honor of Sue Bojdak becoming a bat mitzvah

Nina Raff & Annie Winters in memory of Phyllis Mintzer, Judy Macks, Nathan Raff and Cecile Winters

David Rosen in honor of Sue Bojdak's bat mitzvah

Gabby Volodarsky & Ege Kozak in honor of Sue Bojdak's Bat Mitzvah

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Allan Berenstein in honor of Rabbi Camille Shira Angel

Ray Bernstein in honor of Rabbi Camille Shira Angel

Congregation Beth El in honor of Rabbi Camille Shira Angel

Congregation Rodeph Shalom in honor of Rabbi Angel's 10th Anniversary

Tova Green in memory of Martha Schwartz

Ira Hirschfield & Tom Hansen in honor of Rabbi Angel's 10th anniversary

Lisa Inman & Alisa Gilden in honor of Rabbi Angel's 10th Anniversary

Batya Kalis in honor of Rabbi Angel's 10 years at CSZ

Ron & Ruth Miguel in honor of Rabbi Angel's 10th Anniversary

Carolyn Pines & Judy Schwartz in honor of Rabbi Angel's 10th Anniversary

Susan Schwartz in honor of the birth of her great-nephew, Noah Jonathan Schwartz

Robert Tat in honor of Rabbi Angel's 10th anniversary

Judith Wolfe in honor of Rabbi Angel's 10th anniversary

What's Up at Sha'ar Zahav

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Events

Jeffrey A. Miller Scholar in Residence Weekend with Rabbi Anne Brener

JANUARY 21-23, 2011

Please see cover story for full details.

A House in Order: Are You Prepared?

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23, 2-5 PM

Please see cover story for full details.

Symposium on Queer Jewish Religiosity in America

FEBRUARY 26-27

Queer Judaism in America: Directions and Trends

The last few years have witnessed the publication of a number of Jewish queer texts that chose to engage traditional forms of Jewish ritual and literature. The proposed symposium seeks to acknowledge the contribution of these works to American Jewish life by engaging the editors and authors of these works, and by facilitating a conversation about queer Judaism. For more information visit:

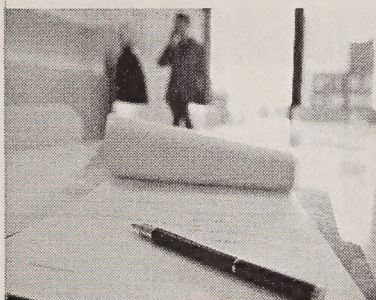
http://www.stanford.edu/dept/jewishstudies/events/queer_symp/program.html

Don't miss our next congregational trip to Israel and Palestine!

Sha'ar Zahav's 3rd Israel Trip led by Rabbi Camille Shira Angel will take place April 28 through May 11, 2011. This trip will be a chance to experience the land, its blessings and its challenges. The trip will

include opportunities for daily spiritual practice, Shabbat celebration, community and fun. An educational series for the trip is in development.

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From l to r:
Arthur Slepian,
Eyal Liebermann,
Asaf Lebovitz, and
Zehorit Sorek.
photo by Josh Weisman

Israelis Speak about Being Orthodox and Gay

BY ARTHUR SLEPIAN

Is it possible to be Orthodox and gay in Israel? On Sunday, November 7, more than 80 people came to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav to hear three speakers from Israel answer that question with a resounding "yes." The three speakers, Asaf Lebovitz, Eyal Liebermann, and Zehorit Sorek, in a panel moderated by me, told their stories and spoke of the work their organizations do which has built a growing movement of many hundreds of men and women in Israel.

The Israeli leaders were in San Francisco as part of a speaking tour sponsored by *A Wider Bridge*. Over the course of ten days, the leaders spoke to well over 500 people in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York City. This tour was

the first major event for *A Wider Bridge*, a relatively new organization that seeks to create opportunities for LGBT Jews in the United States to have greater connection with Israel. The event at Sha'ar Zahav was co-sponsored by the LGBT Alliance of the Jewish Community Federation, as well as several other Bay Area synagogues.

Asaf Lebovitz, 30, is one of the co-founders of *Havruta*, the Israeli organization for gay Orthodox men. Asaf spoke about his first attempt, when he was 20 and serving as a soldier in the IDF, to confide in a prominent rabbi about his sexuality. He was sent to a psychologist who ultimately recommended that he visit a female "surrogate" or "escort" who would teach him how to be with a woman. He did not follow this advice, but it was a powerful reminder of how many young Orthodox men are still being coerced into damaging

"reparative therapy." Later, Asaf found a much more supportive voice from a rabbi in his own yeshiva. This experience helped convince him that there was a place for him in the Orthodox world and that he needed to commit himself to the goal of helping other young people like himself. A decade after his first attempt at coming out, Asaf has gone on to realize that goal, helping to lead the groups within Israeli Gay Youth that are specifically designed for young Orthodox men and women.

Zehorit Zorek, 35, is a member of *Bat Kol*, the Israeli organization for religious lesbians, and the founder of The Pride Minyan, an Orthodox group that organizes LGBT-friendly holiday services, celebrations and Shabbaton during the year. She spoke of many years of denying her attraction to other women, and of having two children in a marriage with a man that ultimately ended in divorce. When she found the women of *Bat Kol*, it was like "coming home." Finally, she met other women who shared her story. Today Zehorit lives with her two children and her partner, Limor, in Tel Aviv. Zehorit spoke about her decision to "stay and struggle" within the Orthodox movement. "I don't want to give up on any of the important parts of who I am," she said. And she is proud that she and her partner are now role models for younger LGBT Orthodox Jews, who can see a future that includes both their Orthodox and gay identities.

Eyal Lieberman, 36, described the development of the LGBT Orthodox movement in Israel over the past decade. He cited as pivotal the screening in Israel of the American made film "Trembling Before God," which helped many

LGBT people in the Orthodox community see that they were not alone. Eyal brought a somewhat different perspective to the panel, as he has chosen not to continue to observe many of the Orthodox practices of Judaism. Yet he remains committed to the Orthodox community and wants to help make it a better place for LGBT people. Speaking about his continued dedication to and involvement with the Orthodox community, Eyal said "You can take the boy out of the yeshiva, but you can't take the yeshiva out of the boy."

The speakers' visit to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav was their first experience in a Reform synagogue. They attended that weekend's Friday night service and Asaf gave an inspiring drash. Speaking on Sunday, the guests expressed their gratitude for the way in which LGBT leaders in the Reform movement and synagogues like Congregation Sha'ar Zahav have led the way, enabling LGBT people to claim a place in the Jewish world. They recognize that in some way our struggle for equality has paved the way for theirs. Said Eyal, "We feel like we are standing on the shoulders of giants." At the conclusion of the event, Rabbi Angel presented our guests with a copy of Siddur Sha'ar Zahav. It was clear from many conversations both before and after the event that the connection between these Orthodox Israeli visitors and Congregation Sha'ar Zahav will be one that both endures and enriches both communities. *A Wider Bridge* is proud to be part of the bridge-building between the speakers and CSZ, between Israelis and Americans, and between these Orthodox Jews and their allies here in the U.S. in the Reform and Conservative movements.

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October

8/9

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November

5/6

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anniversary*

12/13

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- and by-
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honor of Rabbi Kukla's birthday*

19/20

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by **Helene Wenzel** *In memory of her
father, Morris Wenzel, and in
gratitude for her mother's healing*

Music In The Mishkan's Twelfth Season!

The acclaimed Bridge Players return to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav for the twelfth season of Music in the Mishkan. CSZ member and violinist Randall Weiss will be joined by his wonderful colleagues Leslie Ludena (violin), Natalia Vershilova (viola), Victoria Ehrlich (cello) and Marilyn Thompson (piano) for three Sunday afternoon concerts.

Our new Petrov piano will be featured on all three programs.

All concerts are Sunday afternoons at 4:00 pm. They are followed by a wine and cheese reception. You can order tickets by calling the CSZ office at 415.861.6932, or by filling out the order form you received in November. The full programs are listed below. Don't miss these beautiful concerts in our lovely sanctuary!

February 6

"Time after Time"

Mozart—Duo for Violin and Viola in B flat major
Avshalomov—Sonata for Cello and Piano
Faure—Sonata for Violin and Piano

March 13

"Second Time Around"

Dauber—Serenata
Mendelssohn—String Quartet, Op. 44. No 1
Dvorak—Piano Quintet

May 8

"Third Time's the Charm"

Bloch—In the Mountains
Faure—Piano Quartet in c minor
Brahms—Piano Quintet

Life Cycles

Mazel tov to **Marty Fox** and his wife **Reagan** on the birth of their daughter, **Josephine Hannah Fox**

Mazel tov to **Kelley Clements** on the birth of her nephew, **Kevin Andrew Clements**

Mazel tov to **Billie Mandel** and **Ryan Buchholz Mandel** on the birth of their son, **Gabriel**

Mazel tov to **Sue Bojdak** on her Bat Mitzvah

Naches

Mazel tov to **Kevin Johnson** on being accepted to Columbia University.

Mazel tov to **Shayna Prochovnick**, whose team, the Balboa High School Lady Bucs Varsity Girls Volleyball, came in second place in the City championship. The team was undefeated in regular season play and the play-offs, defeated only by Lincoln at the finals at Kezar.

Hakarat Hatov

Our daily Ma'ariv service has gone into hiatus for the time being. We'd like to extend a heartfelt toda raba to **Avraham Giannini** for starting this service and keeping it going for the past nine years, along with **Dana Vinikoff** and all the other service leaders.

Toda Raba

Thank you to everyone who help make Rabbi Angel's 10th Anniversary Celebration a huge success:

Steve Mazer, Sharyn Saslafsky, Larry Wong, Kathleen Friedlander, Florence Nacamulli, Cantor Sharon Bernstein, Kirsten Gustavson, Jeanette Nichols, Daniel Chesir, Alex Ingersoll, Ora Prochovnick, Arthur Slepian, Karen Segal, Marsha Attie, Andrew Ramer, Howard Steiermann, Ilana Sherer, Sara Felder Noily, Dev Felder Noily, Chanah Harei-Orr, Michael Bettinger, Ernest Friedlander, Lynn Kaplan, Cameron Kaplan,

Nancy Meyer, Eileen Lynette, Beth Sousa, Michael Chertok, Aaron Buchbinder, Andy Schwartz, James Carlson, Laura Lowe, Ben Hansen, Molly Hirschfeld, Regina Wurst

New Members

We warmly welcome the following new members to our congregation:

Jill Abelson and Jeff Cohen
Todd Ormsbee

Learning to Reconnect

(continued from page 3)

Participants must commit to the program for the year

They must be willing to share what they have learned

They must demonstrate a willingness to engage in dialogue with people whose views they strongly disagree with, or even find morally reprehensible.

On Sunday, January 16th, from 2-6 pm, there will be a half-day program for anyone interested in finding out more about Project Reconnections. Even if you don't think you can commit to the year-long program, you are still welcome to join us. You will have a chance to learn more about what the year-long program will look like, and to experience some of what the group will do. Watch your email for more information.

I hope you will consider participating in Project Reconnections. It may change your life. It will certainly change our community for the better.

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The World Is Shrinking

BY JAMES CARLSON

The last time Google Maps measured, San Francisco was 2,137 miles away from Glenview, Illinois. I want to request a recalibration of that distance, because I think the mileage may be considerably smaller now.

What caused the tectonic shift that brought these two cities closer? The phenomenon known as *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav*.

The Chicago suburb of Glenview (pop. 46,207) is not exactly a hotbed of LGBTQ activity. I know that because I lived there 45 years ago, and some of my family still does. This past summer, The Glenview Community Church declared itself to be an Open and Affirming congregation for people of all sexual & gender identities. As soon as the church board passed the resolution, my sister, who is active in the leader-

ship, sent me an email. She expressed her pride and praised her minister's courage in initiating the course of action.

I spoke to Rabbi Angel about this development. We decided that I would purchase a copy of *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav* to send to the minister along with a note from Rabbi Angel. Reverend Roberts sent back an appreciative thank you. We thought we'd finished our work. We were wrong.

Rev. Roberts actually read through some of the passages Rabbi Angel had recommended. And then he read more. And then he used *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav* to conduct a teaching for the church board. And then he wrote an article for the monthly bulletin so that the 2,000 households in membership would know about our siddur. He encouraged members to visit the church library to read this beautiful volume of liturgy.

When I visited my family recently,

Rev. Roberts invited me to lunch. He talked about his passion for social justice and commitment to interfaith programming. *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav* provided him with liturgical prose to drive home the message. The LGBTQ population is not a big demographic at Glenview Community Church. Nonetheless, *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav* provided ideas and readings that put substance to their resolution to be open and affirming. I felt as if we'd hit a home run in placing our siddur in a community that will use and appreciate it. I think we shrunk the distance between our two cities and brought diverse communities closer together.

Can you think of a community in some far-flung corner of the globe that would benefit from having a copy of *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav* in its library? If you can, please join me in shrinking the world just a little, with the glorious words of our siddur.



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Condolences

To **Tova Green**, on the death of her former partner, Frances Peavey

To **Julie Dorf**, on the death of her friend, Philip Wald

To **Leslie Kane, Manny Fishman and Shmulik Fishman**, on the death of Norma Kane (Leslie's mother, Manny's mother-in-law, Shmulik's grandmother)

To **Ron Edelman**, on the death of his cousin, Allan Edelman

To **Jenni Olson**, on the death of her step-father, Chuck Gorder

To **Ken Repp**, on the death of his aunt, Katherine Chaffey

Member Yahrzeits

January

- 3 Aaron Nacamulli
- 9 Jerome Davis
- 18 Keith Fenton
- 20 George Ash
- 26 Cheryl Orvis
- 27 Bill Ashley-Dobbin
- 28 Nathan Eli Weinstein

February

- 1 Steven Richter
- 2 Stephen Walters
- 4 John Atteridg
- 6 Ronald Wilmont
- 14 Ziggy Gimmicher
- 14 Allen Harris
- 14 Barbara Rosenblum
- 15 Allen Ellis
- 17 Rabbi Jason Gaber
- 23 Leland Vogel

Please Be in Touch With Me

I am eager to be in touch with all members of the CSZ family whenever there are occasions of joy or sadness in your lives.

Where there is a death in the family, please call me as soon as possible. We very much want to be there with you at a time of grief.

*Rabbi Camille
Shira Angel*

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26 TEVET	27 TEVET	28 TEVET 7:00 pm Spiritual Check-In	29 TEVET	1 SH'VAT 7:00 pm SFOP Meeting	2 SH'VAT 6:00 pm Friday Night Live 8:15 pm Shabbat Service	25 TEVET 9:00 am Torah Study 10:15 am Shabbat Service
4 SH'VAT	5 SH'VAT 6:30 pm Morning Service class	6 SH'VAT	7 SH'VAT	8 SH'VAT	9 SH'VAT 7:30 pm Shabbat Service Shabbat Shira	10 SH'VAT 9:00 am Torah Study 10:15 am Shabbat Service 1:00 pm Stretch, Kvetch, and Breathe
11 SH'VAT 2:00 pm Project Reconnections	12 SH'VAT Office closed MLK Jr. holiday	13 SH'VAT	14 SH'VAT	15 SH'VAT Va'ad meeting	16 SH'VAT 7:30 Shabbat Service Jeffrey A Miller Scholar in Residence	17 SH'VAT 9:00 am Torah Study 10:15 am Shabbat Simcha
18 SH'VAT 2:00 pm A House in Order	19 SH'VAT 6:30 pm Morning Service class	20 SH'VAT	21 SH'VAT	22 SH'VAT 7:00 pm Service leaders chavurah	23 SH'VAT 7:30 pm Shabbat Service with Nehirim	24 SH'VAT 9:00 am Torah Study 10:15 am Shabbat Service 8:00 pm Cantor Unplugged IV
25 SH'VAT	26 SH'VAT 6:30 pm Morning Service class					

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		27 SH'VAT 7:00 pm Spiritual Check-In 7:00 pm A Jewish Path to Meaning	28 SH'VAT 7:00 pm What Makes a Good Argument?	29 SH'VAT 7:00 pm SFOP	30 SH'VAT 6:00 pm Friday Night Live 8:15 pm Shabbat Service	1 ADAR 9:00 am Torah Study 10:15 am Shabbat Service Parker Windesheim- Zigas Bar Mitzvah
2 ADAR 4:00 pm Music in the Mishkan	3 ADAR 6:30 pm Morning Service class	4 ADAR 6:00 pm Planning for Retirement 7:00 pm A Jewish Path to Meaning	5 ADAR	6 ADAR	7 ADAR 7:30 pm Shabbat Service	8 ADAR 9:00 am Torah Study 10:15 am Shabbat Service Beyond Gender, Sex and Race
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9 ADAR	10 ADAR 6:30 pm Morning Service class	11 ADAR 7:00 pm A Jewish Path to Meaning	12 ADAR 7:00 pm Siddur Sha'ar Zahav Reflections	13 ADAR 6:45 pm Va'ad meeting	14 ADAR 7:30 pm Shabbat Service	15 ADAR 9:00 am Torah Study 10:15 am Shabbat Service Elias Ross Trupin Bar Mitzvah
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
16 ADAR	17 ADAR Office Closed President's Day	18 ADAR 7:00 pm A Jewish Path to Meaning	19 ADAR	20 ADAR 7:00 pm Service Leaders Chavurah	21 ADAR 7:30 pm Shabbat Service	22 ADAR 9:00 am Torah Study 10:15 am Shabbat Service 11:00 am Amichai Lau-Lavie at BSPM PM TBD <i>Storytelling</i> with Amichai & Hovdalah 7:30 pm Queer Judaism Conference opens
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
23 ADAR	24 ADAR 6:30 pm Morning Service class					
27	28					